OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
5010-106
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO Mr. Bishop

DATE 5-21-68

FROM M. A. Jones

SUBJECT: MURKIN

Early this month, the Director turned down a request from Jerry O'Leary (a reliable contact at "The Evening Star" who has written two outstanding articles regarding the Director) and "The Reader's Digest" for an article to be written for that magazine by O'Leary regarding the Martin Luther King investigation. Both O'Leary and "The Reader's Digest" have expressed continued interest in this matter; and the purpose of this memorandum is to set forth reasons why, at this point in the investigation to locate James Earl Ray, it is felt additional consideration should be given to such an article.

In February, 1968, when Hobart Lewis (President and Executive Editor of "The Reader's Digest") came to the Bureau with Associate Editors John Barron and Kenneth Gilmore, they discussed with the Director the possibility of publishing another article concerning one of our "Ten Most Wanted Fugitives." (It will be recalled that in the Fall of 1960, an article in "The Reader's Digest" concerning fugitive Joseph Corbett, Jr., the kidnap-killer of Adolph Coors III, produced leads from readers of the magazine which resulted in the apprehension of Corbett in Canada.) At the time of this visit, the Director told Mr. Lewis that we would remain alert for another "Ten Most Wanted Fugitive" to be featured in the magazine.

In the Coors case, inestimable savings of investigative time and funds resulted from publication by "The Reader's Digest" of the article regarding fugitive Joseph Corbett, Jr. Many of the same elements as existed in the Coors case also are found in the King investigation--prominent victim; intense public interest in the case; and the fugitive in both instances being a prison escapee with a reputation as a "loner" and a penchant for using fictitious names and backgrounds to conceal his true identity.

REC-41 3877

It was the broad international circulation of "The Reader's Digest" which produced the leads that resulted in Corbett's arrest in Canada.

1 - Mr. DeLoach
1 - Mr. Bishop
1 - Mr. Rosen
1 - C. L. McGowan

CONTINUED - OVER

GWG:mac (9)

79 MAY 29 1968

M. A. Jones to Bishop Memo
RE: MURKIN

In the King case, we again are dealing with a fugitive known to have been in both Canada and Mexico during the past year, and who may be out of the United States at this time. "The Reader's Digest" has a large readership throughout the Western Hemisphere. Last month, for example, the Legal Attache in Buenos Aires, Argentina, advised that through its Spanish and Portuguese editions, "The Reader's Digest" receives "the widest distribution of all mass communications media in this area"--and he suggested the possibility of an article regarding James Earl Ray in "The Reader's Digest."

Jerry O'Leary [redacted] He has done a tremendous amount of reading, interviewing and "reportorial digging" on the King case in Memphis, Birmingham, Atlanta and other places. Other newsmen consider him the best-read and -informed writer on the King case, and this is why "The Reader's Digest" sounded him out on this assignment.

In view of his strong background in this case, O'Leary could, of course, write an article on his own concerning fugitive James Earl Ray. Naturally, if such an article is to be published, it would greatly be to our advantage to have the benefit of reading it, and offering any changes we feel necessary, prior to publication.

It is O'Leary's intent to limit the article to material which has previously been published, together with what he has dug up himself with regard to Ray's background and character traits.

O'Leary has pointed out that day-by-day the true facts of this case and the accurate picture of fugitive James Earl Ray are being thrown more and more out of focus by the distorted articles written by such irresponsible characters as Louis Lomax. He feels that "The Reader's Digest," with its multimillion circulation in the United States and abroad, affords an excellent medium for straightening out the misrepresentations of others, as well as for producing leads which (as in the case of Joseph Corbett, Jr.,) may possibly assist in the apprehension of "Ten Most Wanted Fugitive" Ray.

RECOMMENDATION:

That we extend to O'Leary and "The Reader's Digest" the same cooperation in regard to an article on "Ten Most Wanted Fugitive" James Earl Ray as was rendered in the Joseph Corbett, Jr., fugitive investigation.

OK

No. We can't play favorites with such an article